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## **The Place: Lock Haven, U.S.A.**

Smiley

(past President of Local 1787, school board member, and civic activist, as were many of his co-workers):

Nestled in the valley below the Bald Eagle Mountains and along the Susquehanna River lies a town called Lock Haven. Lock Haven is in Clinton County with a population close to 10,000 and is in the central part of Pennsylvania.

Until a few years ago, nationally known Piper Aircraft had its home in Lock Haven and was its largest industry. Piper was involved in a takeover and eventually moved to Florida. This left the paper mill, now known as International Paper Company as the largest industry in Lock Haven.

The paper industry in Lock Haven goes back a long way. It was in 1880 when two brothers, L.D. and M.M. Armstrong built the Pennsylvania Pulp and Paper Co. in Lock Haven. It was located here because of an abundance of pulpwood, coal, and fresh water. Also there was good rail transportation.

In 1890 the company reorganized under the name: New York and Pennsylvania Co. This reorganization combined the Armstrong interests with those of A.G. Paine.

In 1920 a second mill was built called the Castanea Mill, which was close to the Lock Haven plant. Paper in this mill was made for Curtis Publishing Company.

In 1950 these mills became a wholly owned subsidiary of the Curtis Publishing Co. and operated as the New York and Pennsylvania Co., Inc. On May 6, 1965 the Lock Haven mills were sold to Hammermill Paper Company which is headquartered in Erie, Pa.

Throughout all these years the paper mills in Lock Haven have been family oriented places to work. Grandfathers, fathers, sons and daughters helped to make the paper mill and the town of Lock Haven grow and prosper.

The workers of Local 1787, United Paper Workers International Union in Lock Haven and

Hammermill Paper Company were a close knit family.

W. Craig McClelland, former president and chief executive officer of Hammermill Paper Co. once said: "There has been a change at Lock Haven in the last 15 years. The company has made many capital improvements, but even more impressive is the attitude of employees. Everybody at the plant is pulling together."

Mr. Klaus Hausseman, president of ECH Will Co., in a letter to Mr. Ralph Lovette said: "These numbers are unbelievable and by far the best production numbers ever achieved by any mill around the world". He was referring to a world record 330.8 tons of paper set on No. 3 Will Sheeter. He further stated, "The Will Pemco Group is proud to be associated with World Champions."

Mr. Ralph Lovette, the plant manager in Lock Haven stated in a letter to the employees, "We are an efficient, competitive plant having an excellent reputation in the industry for productivity, quality and customer service."

The dedicated paperworkers of Local 1787, United Paperworkers International Union have constantly established new records and these are the same people who helped make Hammermill Paper Co. in Lock Haven, Pa. so attractive to enable International Paper Company to buy out Hammermill.

On August 11, 1986, International Paper Company took over Hammermill Paper Company. IP had become the largest paper company in the world.

Little did we know what was in store for us; but we found out very quickly in the first negotiation session between International Paper Co. and our Local 1787, United Paperworkers International Union. International Paper wanted to break the union by demanding far too many concessions which would be impossible for workers to give up.

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The reader seeking a more traditional synopsis of the labor conflict recounted first-hand by the voices below would do well to consult the portrayal of the IP strike by Ronald L. Filipelli. See his [Labor Conflict in the United States - An Encyclopedia](#) (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1990), pp.392-394.

For a general overview of the strike but with special focus on the Jay, Maine local's role, see Julius Getman's [The Betrayal of Local 14](#) (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998) and

Peter Kellman's [Pain on Their Faces](#) (New York: Apex Press, 1998).

See also Kellman's forthcoming text titled [People's Republic of Jay - The Story of the Paperworkers Union and the Future of Labor.](#)

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